TRANSPORTATION

By Alison Taylor

The State of Utah's Division of Fleet Operations (DFO) has spent the past several years gathering vehicle information through a purchased fleet tracking software program. (Fleet Anywhere from Peregrine). Fueling and maintenance companies with download capabilities have been able to send information to the fleet tracking software through a program created in-house by DFO programmers. The information is then processed, analyzed, and made into several reports. The reports are used to help state agencies monitor Preventive Maintenance (PM) services, which are necessary to keep a vehicle operating at peak performance levels. Utilization issues, safety recall service completion, accident repairs and other fleet maintenance matters are also reported through the fleet tracking system.

Once DFO programmers were able to create the reports in "real-time" using information gathered, they began forwarding the reports to fleet contacts and state program directors from the agencies that lease vehicles from DFO. However, with more than 12,000 state employees driving the 7,376 state vehicles each year, creating the reports had become so time consuming that the fleet contacts were often waiting for their reports to be completed and mailed, thus making the reports less and less "real-time" and much less useful. The DFO management team envisioned fleet customers having access to the reports anytime they needed the information. The programmers were asked to make this happen.

Working for a state whose governor promotes e-government, the programmers began with the idea of giving the customers on-line access to the reports. However, providing the public with an accurate list of state vehicles, where they are located and who is assigned to which vehicle, could become a risk to the driver as well as their vehicle. Agency directors were also concerned that other agencies could have access to their vehicle data. To overcome these obstacles, division programmer, Judy Wilkins, created a secure web page, which requires a user id and password to enter the reports area of the site.

Only people who are employed in a position directly related to fleet management on the agency level, such as a fleet contact or program director, are given login capabilities. The same log-in information that is used to gain access to the DFO tracking program FleetAnywhere is used to enter the secure reports on the fleet website.

"Basically, a person logs into the reports area like they are logging into FleetAnywhere. Their user id and password will determine what information they are allowed to see. If they are with Public Safety, they only see Public Safety data," Wilkins said. "It is also set up so that people employed at higher levels can see all of their agency information and people employed at lower levels can only see their portion of the fleet. For example, the person who oversees the Human Services fleet [at the department level] has access to all of their vehicle information and the fleet person at the State Hospital only sees State Hospital information".

To insure that confidentiality requirements are maintained as the user moves through the different reports, Wilkins built a security mechanism into the log-in access by utilizing background programs.

"We built security into the programs. The access rights information is passed from screen to screen as the user travels through the site. So when someone logs into the system, it knows who they are and what information they are allowed to see. Then as the programs build the different reports, the information displayed is kept within the security parameters," she said.

As Wilkins worked on the programming, DFO management Analyst, David Rees, and the Applications Administrator, Angie Watson, began by teaching themselves how to use a reporting software called Actuate. This software was designed to build Internet friendly reports using information collected in data tracking systems such as FleetAnywhere.

"We would start with an idea of what we wanted the report to do then we would read the software manual and discover how to make it happen. Basically, Angie and I split up the reports that we wanted to create and made our way through the process. As we learned more about the software we would share that information with each other," Rees said. "Then before sending a report out to the web, we would build it, test it, play with it, tweak it and then test it some more."

The DFO web site currently supports several secure reports including Cost Per-Mile, GasCard Fueling History, Maintenance History, Recall Report, Utilization Report, Fleet at a Glance and a Vehicle Listing Report. Other reports will be created as needed.

The monthly billing statements are also being processed through the web reports. Customers will be receiving both an electronic invoice and a paper invoice until later this fall at which time the process will go to the web based billing program. It is estimated that e-billing will save DFO thousands of dollars in printing costs every year.

DFO has created a sample set of the secure reports which can be accessed at http://168.177.192.56:8080/ActuateSecurity/login.html or by choosing the reports section from the Services menu found at http://fleet.utah.gov. The user id and password are FOGUEST, FOGUEST. When accessing the Maintenance History Report, enter equipment id FO5388. Use fueling card number 078691 to see a sample of the GasCard Fueling History.

DFO Division Director, Steve Satlzgiver stated, "The best thing about the web reports is that it allows an agency to be proactive. They can fix a problem before we have to contact them to let them know there is a problem. The customers have the upper hand now, because they have the tools to work with."